

Bramley Church of England Primary School

Bramley Lane, Bramley, Tadley, Hampshire RG26 5AH

Inspection dates	22–23 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders and governors have taken rapid action to improve the quality of education since the previous inspection. Consequently, teaching has improved and pupils' standards have risen.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Staff have created a welcoming environment in which children feel safe and secure.
- Teaching is now good, and previously weak teaching has been eradicated. Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work for pupils.
- Pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics has improved. By the end of Year 6 in 2015, pupils' attainment was above average in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved and is now good. They behave well in class and they move around the school safely and sensibly. Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of enriching experiences that contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of physical education has improved and helps pupils to lead healthy lifestyles.
- New leaders and teachers have quickly embraced their new roles owing to the high level of training and support they receive.
- Leaders at all levels are ambitious and have created a strong team who work closely together to improve outcomes for all pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils make slower progress in writing. Work in their books shows that some pupils have poor handwriting and the presentation of their work is often untidy. There is a legacy of poor spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils' writing shows that they do not all have a richness of vocabulary to express their ideas and thoughts fluently and confidently.
- Key information for parents is not always provided in a timely way. The school website is not easy to navigate.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - ensuring that they learn to write neatly and spell and punctuate accurately by the end of Year 2
 - developing pupils' fluency and confidence in writing by using examples from high-quality books to extend their vocabulary and richness of language
 - insisting on the highest standards of presentation in all pupils' work
 - ensuring that pupils respond to teachers' comments by correcting and improving work when it has been marked.

- Improve communications with parents at all levels so they are well informed about the work of the school and the events taking place.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Despite a high turnover of staff and leaders in recent years, teaching has improved and pupils make good progress. This is due to the relentless focus current leaders have placed on securing good progress for all pupils.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious. They have high expectations for themselves and pupils and have created a culture in which all are expected to strive to do their best. Their aim, 'to develop reflective, resilient learners ready to shape their future', underpins all aspects of the school's work. This is also true for staff, who are encouraged to reflect on their work to see how it can be strengthened.
- School leaders have a good understanding of what is needed to bring about further improvement. They created plans in consultation with colleagues, governors, parents and pupils so that the whole school community understands what the school is aiming to achieve. The new leader for literacy has put into place appropriate actions to improve writing, but it is still too early to see the impact of these actions.
- There is a comprehensive programme of professional development for staff at all levels. This includes training, coaching, mentoring and visits to other schools to help staff to improve their skills. One teacher reflected the views of many with her comment, 'As a teacher who is an aspiring leader, I am supported in my roles in coaching, mentoring and leadership very well. I am being supported with ideas and projects and I am able to support leaders in turn.'
- Leaders visit classrooms formally as well as informally and so they have a clear view of the quality of teaching. They have taken robust action to address previously weaker teaching while supporting those who need some additional help to improve their skills. Staff understand that they are fully accountable for pupils' progress and that only the best teaching is financially rewarded.
- Equality of opportunity is fundamental to the school's values. Leaders take steps to ensure that all pupils have equal chances to succeed. This is shown in the thoughtful way in which the school spends the additional funding provided to support disadvantaged pupils. While some eligible pupils benefit from extra help in the classroom, others are helped with the costs of school activities, clubs and residential visits. This gives disadvantaged pupils the same opportunities as others to develop confidence to succeed academically and personally.
- Pupils study subjects under an overall theme or topic so that they understand how different aspects of learning link together. While English and mathematics are rightly given high priority, pupils also enjoy learning about life in the past while studying topics such as Vikings or the Egyptians. All topics are supported by class texts such as, *How to Train Your Dragon* and this helps to enrich pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is enhanced by visits to local places of interest such as Basingstoke Market, and this adds to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The range of after-school clubs has increased and includes sporting activities. The additional primary school sports funding has been effectively used to provide specialist coaches to work alongside teachers and pupils to help them to develop their skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils from Year 3 and Year 5 developed their hockey skills with the support of a professional coach.
- British values such as respect, tolerance and democracy are successfully promoted through the curriculum and through the school's values that permeate the school. Pupils understand the democratic process by taking part in elections to posts of responsibility such as the school council. Acts of worship encourage pupils to reflect on the meaning of religious events and how these relate to the actions they take in their own lives. This helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- While most parents are supportive of the school and current leaders, a small minority who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, expressed concerns about communications and the quality of information they receive. Some feel that they do not know how well their children are doing and say that the notice they are given for some events is often too late. Inspectors agreed that some key information is not readily accessible and that the school's website is not well organised.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have supported successive leaders over recent years, particularly in their determination to improve teaching to bring about necessary improvements.
 - Governors have a wide range of professional skills that they use to scrutinise the performance of the school and to ensure that the school is on track to achieve its objectives. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve further.

- Governors have been fully instrumental in shaping the future of the school and carefully check the progress of actions taken by school leaders. They visit school regularly to see for themselves how well the school is led and managed on a day-to-day basis. They appreciate the high level of support provided by the local authority to help to strengthen leadership.
- Governors hold leaders firmly to account and they provide a good level of professional challenge. They ensure that all monies are spent wisely and that the school provides good value for money.
- Governors attend relevant safeguarding training and ensure that all policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe are up to date.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors are fully aware of their statutory and moral responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff receive frequent training and they all understand the need to be vigilant. The policy for child protection is reviewed regularly so staff know exactly what to do should a concern be raised. Leaders work in close cooperation with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right support in a timely manner.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Staff have established good working relationships with pupils and consequently pupils want to learn. Pupils have positive attitudes and this shows in the way in which they are keen to participate in class by responding to teachers' questions. Pupils respect teachers and behave well in most classes.
- Careful planning allows teachers to provide work that is at the right level for most pupils. They know pupils well and plan work that builds on what pupils already know and this helps to accelerate pupils' progress. Throughout lessons, teachers check pupils' progress and adjust their teaching accordingly to help all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to ask questions that allow pupils to reason and explain and so deepen their understanding. Teachers know exactly what it is they want pupils to learn and they explain clearly so that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability, make good progress.
- Teachers probe pupils' understanding by asking them questions that make them think hard. This helps pupils, particularly those who are most able, to progress well. Teachers show pupils examples of what they want them to learn and this helps pupils to understand how to carry out calculations. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher clearly demonstrated to pupils how to use a particular calculation to solve division problems.
- Teaching of writing is weaker than it is in other subjects. This is because some teachers do not make enough use of high-quality literature to show pupils good examples of written English. Consequently, pupils do not see enough rich vocabulary or imaginative features such as similes and metaphors to help them to improve their own writing. Teachers do not always make explicit the links between reading and writing and this slows pupils' progress.
- Owing to a legacy of previously weak teaching, some pupils have not secured the basic skills in writing. Their handwriting and presentation of their work is not as good as it should be. Teachers do not all insist on the highest standards of presentation of work in pupils' books and this can lead to inaccuracies in pupils' mathematical calculations.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to lessons. They provide good support to the teacher and to pupils and this helps lessons to run smoothly. Sometimes they work with individual pupils on specific programmes and at other times they help pupils to learn in class by breaking the activity down into smaller steps.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they provide helpful guidance about what pupils need to do to improve their work. However, not all teachers provide opportunities for pupils to respond to their comments and this slows pupils' progress, particularly in writing. There are times when pupils have few strategies for when they get stuck and they spend too long waiting for an adult to help them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school provides a warm, calm and welcoming environment in which pupils feel safe and secure. This is reflected in their attendance that has improved and is now average.

- Pupils are happy and they enjoy school. They have very positive attitudes and they want to do well. Pupils conduct themselves well in class and when they move around the school.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They show respect towards each other and to adults. In class and in assemblies, they listen to each other and respond appropriately. They enjoy the opportunities they have in class to discuss and share their ideas.
- Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe. They know about dangers associated with roads and railways and that some non-medicinal drugs can be harmful. Within information technology (IT) lessons, they are taught about the need to stay safe when using computers and modern electronic devices. Pupils know they should never provide personal information when using technology.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying, including that related to computers. They say incidents of bullying have reduced and are now rare. They say there is very little name-calling and that most pupils are kind and helpful.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Procedures for improving pupils' behaviour have led to a significant reduction in incidents of poor behaviour. Most pupils understand the school's rewards and sanctions and respond to teachers' instructions and guidance. Most staff apply the school's behaviour systems consistently and so pupils understand the expectations of their behaviour.
- Lunchtimes are sociable occasions. They are well organised so that pupils have time to chat while eating hot meals or packed lunches. There are a number of activities available for pupils at breaktimes, some of which are led by adults and others that pupils organise for themselves. There is plenty of space for pupils to run about and midday staff supervise a first aid station to deal with the very few cuts and bruises that occasionally occur.
- School records show a marked reduction in the number of exclusions, and there are few reported incidents of poor behaviour related to bullying, name-calling or racist incidents.
- Just occasionally, where teaching fails to engage pupils, they will fidget, chat or call out, and this can disrupt learning for other pupils. Some pupils do not take enough care with their work and so do not present it to the highest possible standard.
- The large majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, and who spoke to inspectors during the inspection agreed that their children were happy and safe and that they behaved well in school. Governors and staff agreed with this view.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress in most subjects and this is reflected in their improved results in the national assessments in 2015. Current performance information shows that pupils make good progress overall although it is better in reading and mathematics than it is in writing. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check in 2015, pupils' results were above average and this gets them off to a good start in reading. At the end of key stage 1, their attainment was significantly above average in reading and mathematics and it was average in writing.
- At key stage 2, pupils have suffered from a legacy of previously weak teaching and have had to work hard to catch up to where they should be. This has been successful in mathematics and reading, but in writing they still have more ground to cover.
- The school has been particularly successful in closing the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils. Staff have targeted resources carefully to meet these pupils' personal and academic needs and so they achieve well.
- Support provided for pupils who have special educational needs or disability has enabled this group of pupils to achieve in line with their classmates. The new inclusion leader helps staff to identify those pupils who struggle and to pinpoint their particular problems. They are then provided with the right support to help them to overcome their difficulties.
- Provision for the most-able pupils has improved and so these pupils achieve well. In 2015, a higher than average percentage of pupils reached Level 6 in mathematics in the national tests. This is well above the standard usually expected for pupils of that age. Work in pupils' books shows that this high standard set in mathematics is on course to continue as pupils are challenged by higher expectations of the new curriculum.

- Although pupils get off to a good start in reading by successfully learning their phonics, a few still struggle to apply these when reading new words. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading, but sometimes the books they are provided with are too hard. When they come across unfamiliar words, they lack the confidence to use their phonics skills and instead rely on an adult to read for them.
- By Year 6, pupils enjoy talking about their favourite books and authors. They say they appreciate the opportunities they have to read in class and they are especially looking forward to reading the newly purchased books in the school library. They have a good range of skills that enable them to read fluently and confidently.
- Staff provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to write in all subjects across the curriculum and this is helping to increase their rates of progress. However, some pupils still struggle to express their ideas in writing because they still have a weak grasp of basic skills. Their writing often lacks inspiration because they do not have a wide enough range of imaginative vocabulary to express their ideas fluently and confidently.

Early years provision

is good

- Staff have created a bright stimulating environment that is safe and secure both indoors and outside. It is well resourced with toys and equipment that are of good quality. Staff provide good-quality care for children so they feel safe and secure in the Reception classes.
- Relationships between children and adults are good and this makes a positive contribution to children's personal development. Children have developed good social skills. They get on well together whether working or playing and they learn with confidence and enjoyment. They behave well in class and they feel safe in school because of the high level of care provided by adults.
- Children achieve well in the early years and this is shown in the year-on-year increase in the number of children who reach a good level of development. In 2015, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development was well above average. Current information and the quality of teaching indicate that children are well on track to reach similar levels this year.
- Staff know children well and so they plan learning activities that interest and inspire them. Teaching assistants promote children's learning effectively. For example, during the inspection, a teaching assistant helped children to make chocolate nests in preparation for Easter. This inspired a discussion about melting and freezing and the effect of heat on some substances. It also inspired a sense of awe and wonder as children watched in fascination as a block of chocolate melted in front of their eyes.
- Staff provide a good range of activities for children. Adults lead some of these and sometimes children make their own choices. However, there are not always enough times for children to make their own choices independently, as adults often direct them to specific activities. This prevents them from developing good learning habits including resilience and perseverance.
- Teaching is often challenging with high demands placed on children. For example, in a small-group mathematics lesson, children were learning to count forwards and backwards from 20, incorporating both addition and subtraction facts. Other children were being helped to write short sentences based on the Easter story.
- The early years leader has worked hard to improve provision, and consequently children's achievement continues to improve. She leads a team of dedicated staff who strive to ensure that all children develop the skills that prepare them well for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	116278
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10002381

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Nicky Parker
Headteacher (interim)	Lisa Hodgkinson
Telephone number	01256 881339
Website	www.bramley.hants.sch.uk
Email address	adminoffice@bramley.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools and pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- There is provision for children in the early years in three Reception classes. Children attend this provision full time.
- Most pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. This is additional funding provided by the government to support those pupils who, in this school, are entitled to free school meals or who are looked after.
- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club that are run by an external provider and did not form part of this inspection.
- There have been significant changes to the leadership and teaching team since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 21 lessons, or parts of lessons, several of which were seen jointly with school leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books and they attended two assemblies. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the playground and as they moved around the school. They also listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Among the documents scrutinised were school improvement plans, records relating to pupils' behaviour, safety and attendance, and minutes from governors meetings. Inspectors also evaluated the school's information regarding pupils' learning and progress as well as curriculum plans.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, teachers, support staff and three governors, including the chair of governors. They also met formally and informally with groups of pupils and met with an adviser from the local authority.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 100 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also met with parents informally during the inspection. The views of staff were considered by reviewing the 36 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Luisa Gould	Ofsted Inspector
Heidi Boreham	Ofsted Inspector

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